

HIGHLIGHTS

A Children & Youth Services Newsletter for Volunteers & Mentors of CYS-Project Together

May 2004, Vol. XIV, No. 5

CYS-PT Celebrates Its "Stars" at Annual Dinner

The Stars (volunteers) of CYS-Project Together were radiant at the program's annual Volunteer Recognition and Awards Ceremony held April 28 at the UCI University Club in Irvine. Mentors and community service volunteers were given the celebrity treatment for the significant contributions each made to the program over the last year.

"The stars in Hollywood do not come close to matching the vibrancy and dedication of the volunteer "stars" of CYS Project Together," said CYS-PT Service Chief, Sharon Modaff, when she welcomed guests to an evening of food, fun and camaraderie. "Our volunteers possess the star quality required to make a difference in the lives of this country's most precious and important asset-the children we serve."

Alan Albright, MFT, Division Manager, Children and Youth Services, focused his remarks on the generous

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Mentor Conrad Wilson with CYS-PT volunteer coordinator, Diane Prescott.

Therapist Spotlight—Susan Grossi Mentors Need to Know They Are Making a Difference

"A mentor helps a child feel valued and special, and this can not always be done in therapy," said Susan Grossi, Marriage and Family Therapist with Aspen Community Services in Santa Ana. "When a child feels valuable in someone else's eyes, it is priceless."

In her role as a therapist, Susan's goal is to help children reach their full potential. She believes they deserve the opportunity to develop, and although many of her clients have had to live in difficult situations, she strives to help them have a positive childhood. Susan envisions each child as a blank slate, and with assistance, she believes they can reach their potential. She believes that mentors often help to provide that assistance.

Susan has utilized mentors to assist with the therapeutic process since joining Aspen's team in 1998, and currently works with nine mentor matches. She believes the mentor's involvement can help the therapist better understand and treat the child, and has found mentors to be a very valuable part of the therapeutic team. "Mentors can be the eyes and ears for the therapist," Susan said. "They see the child in his or her true life setting and can share this information with the therapist from an unbiased viewpoint."

"The impact mentors have on the kids is very powerful," says Susan.



"Children learn from their mentors who often role model proper boundary settings for the child." Susan added that mentors give children a chance to experience positive adult social skills. "Children identify with their mentor; it gives them someone positive to look up to."

Aware of the complexities and challenges of mentoring, Susan believes these dedicated volunteers benefit from sustained support. She encourages them to call whenever they have questions or concerns and strives to provide the assistance needed to be successful with the child. Susan is aware that many of the children matched with mentors are challenging, and consequently, mentors may not experience positive feedback from the child or family. "Mentors need to be encouraged, and to know how much of an impact they are having on the child."

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Mentors Honored by OC Board of Supervisors

Mentors Stanley Hall and Nancy Bresnan, along with two groups and 50 individuals, were honored for their accomplishments and contributions as County volunteers by the Orange County Board of Supervisors at the eighth annual Countywide volunteer recognition ceremony held April 21.

Stanley Hall, an active retiree, signed up to serve as a mentor with CYS Project Together two years ago. He was first matched with a 17-year-old, and currently mentors a 15-year-old boy. Both teens required a significant amount of emotional and social support to help them work through various challenges. Stan's commitment to the teens never wavered as he worked to develop a trusting and caring relationship with each of them. Over time, his care and support helped the boys improve their self-esteem, their interactions with family members and friends, and their social and academic skills. Due in part to Stan's involvement, the 17-year-old completed high school.

Stan regularly demonstrates many of the qualities that lead to successful mentoring. In working with youth, he is consistent, reliable, approachable and just plain fun to be with. However, his dedication to the CYS-Project Together extends beyond mentoring. During the past two holiday seasons, Stan has served the program in another capacity, as a community service volunteer.

As a seasoned woodworker who loves to share his creations, he did not flinch when asked to cut out 100 wooden Christmas decorations for the program's annual holiday fundraiser. He then recruited his wife, Donna, to lend



her artistic talents to paint each item. Their combined efforts contributed tremendously to the success of CYS-PT's 2003 Holiday Boutique.

Dedicated, compassionate and energetic are just a few of the words that describe Nancy Bresnan. Since 1999, Nancy has served as a mentor with Aspen Community Services/CYS-Project Together, and has mentored seven children.

Currently she is matched with a nine-year-old girl who exhibits low self-esteem and behavior problems that limit her ability to enjoy sustained success at home, in school and within social settings. Working in concert with Aspen clinical staff, Nancy has developed non-clinical strategies to effectively raise the child's self-esteem as well as meet her

treatment goals. Nancy spends four to six hours each week with the girl, engaging her in enrichment activities within the community. According to the child's therapist, "Nancy has positively impacted the child's life. The child is difficult to connect with, but Nancy plugs away, involving her in many activities that help make a difference."

In addition to serving as a volunteer mentor, Nancy has been instrumental in organizing CYS-Project Together's annual holiday event. Over the past four years, she and the Huntington Beach Elks have generously hosted a holiday party for CYS-PT mentors and mentees. For the 2003 party, Santa Claus arrived on a fire truck filled with gifts, Mickey Mouse paid a surprise visit and there was plenty of entertainment for the children, including face painters, clowns, balloon artists and a choir.

Stan and Nancy are among the more than 26,000 volunteers who have donated 942,097 hours of service valued at approximately \$24 million in avoided costs for Orange County government during 2003.

"Our valued volunteers have many different backgrounds, interests, careers and reasons for volunteering," said County CEO James Ruth. "Because of this diversity, they bring an array of experience and expertise to their roles and enhance our existing services and programs. I commend them all for their generosity and dedication."

More information on the County's volunteer recognition ceremony can be viewed by visiting http://www.oc.ca.gov/volunteers/volunteers_page2.html.

Therapist Spotlight-Susan Grossi

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They want and need to know they are making a difference."

Susan received her master's degree in clinical psychology from Pepperdine University and recently earned her master's degree in school psychology. She lives a full and active life and notes that her greatest joy is her family. She feels that her best accomplishment in life is raising her children to be happy, healthy and contributing members in society.

**"It is by spending
one's self that
one becomes rich."**

Sarah Bernhardt

MAY 2004

Calendar of Events

The CYS-Project Together Calendar is a collection of affordable, fun, wholesome and interesting events that can be enjoyed by children, teens and adults.

Saturday, May 1–

Sunday, May 16

"Student Art Exhibit"

Newport Harbor Nautical Museum

151 East Coast Highway, Newport Beach

949-673-786

www.nhnm.org/new-events.htm

In conjunction with the annual Imagination Celebration, adjudicated K-8 student artwork from the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, as well as private schools in the Newport Beach-Costa Mesa area, will be on display in the museum.

Time: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
(Closed Mondays)

Admission: Free

Parking: Free

Saturday, May 8

Pet Fair 2000

Orange County Animal Care Center

561 The City Drive

Orange

714-935-6301

www.ocpetinfo.com/petfair.pdf

For animal lovers of all kinds, this year's Pet Fair features working dog demonstrations, wildlife and exotic animal exhibits, product samples, give-a-ways and food and fun for every age.

Time: 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

Cost: Free (Parking at
The Block is
recommended)

Saturday, May 8

Imagine it! Create it!

Festival of Arts and Pageant

of the Masters

650 Laguna Canyon Road

Laguna Beach

949-494-1145

www.icfestival.com/schedule.htm

The Festival of Arts hosts a day of hands-on art workshops and performances by California Choreographers Dance Festival and No Square Theater. It is a day

dedicated to helping children discover their creativity through a variety of media.

Time: 12 noon–4 p.m.

Cost: Free

Parking: Metered street and
pay-lot nearby. No on-
site parking.

Saturday, May 8

Young Masters Art Show

Assistance League of Irvine

Irvine City Hall Plaza Area

1 Civic Center Plaza

Irvine

949-798-5020

This exhibit consists of more than 500 works of art from Irvine Unified School District students grades K-6 and is open to the public May 8 through May 21. Join opening day ceremonies, which will include a variety of hands-on art experiences, entertainment, and complimentary refreshments.

Time: 1 p.m.–4 p.m.

Cost: Free

Saturday, May 8

Renaissance Old:

Renaissance New

Laguna Art Museum

307 Cliff Drive

Laguna Beach

949-494-8971

This event explores self-portraiture and symbolism as artists once did during the Renaissance. This and other hands-on activities will encourage children to make their own discoveries in art. A treasure hunt with prizes, choral performances, and a dance production will round out this fun-filled day.

Time: 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Cost: Free

Parking: Metered parking on
adjacent streets

Thursday, May 13

Tomorrow's Stars

at the Center

Orange County Performing Arts Center

Founder's Hall

600 Town Center Drive

Costa Mesa

714-556-2787, Ext. 6677

"Tomorrow's Stars at The Center" features the most talented youth from around Orange County. This event is an opportunity to enjoy professional performances featuring top student artists. These award-winning young performers are the very best and brightest in dance, musical theatre, instrumental music and opera. The evening is approximately 75 minutes long with no intermission and is appropriate for ages 10 and up.

Time: 7 p.m. Curtain

Cost: Free

Parking: \$8

Saturday May 15

Crow and Weasel

South Coast Repertory

655 Town Center Drive

Costa Mesa

714-708-5555 for tickets

Set in a mythical time when the world was still new, this Native American tale tells of two young Animal People who travel north from their village to the Land Where Dreaming Begins. Their journey takes them across raging rivers, through forests of talking trees, to the edge of the Arctic Circle and into a world where dreams and reality collide. Performed by SCR's Junior Teen Players (Grades 7–8).

Time: 1 p.m. & 4 p.m.

Cost: \$6 per person

Parking: \$8

Saturday, May 15

May Faire

The Waldorf School of Orange County

2350 Canyon Drive

Costa Mesa

949-574-7734

Step back in time and experience the magic of an old fashioned May Faire. Join family and friends in a colorful celebration of old time merriment and tradition. Enjoy dancing around the Maypole, craft making, artisans, fiddles, call dancing, games, and more. Welcome spring with floral hair garland making, delicious food, and beautiful music.

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Calendar of Events

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Time: 11:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
 Cost: \$3 per person
 (4 crafts are included
 in each child's
 admission)

Parking: Free

Sunday, May 16
 Imagination Celebration
 Grande Finale
 Orange County Performing Arts Center
 Segerstrom Hall
 600 Town Center Drive
 Costa Mesa
 TicketMaster: 714-740-2000
 Show Info: 714-556-2787, Ext. 6677
www.icfestival.com/exhibitions.htm

The grand finale to Orange County's Imagination Celebration in Segerstrom Hall features the incredible Stars of the Peking Acrobats. For more than 20 years, this amazing troupe has cast its spell on audiences around the world, demonstrating their high-energy multifaceted, multi-cultural production of acrobatics, feats of daring, and brilliant costumes. Stars of the Peking Acrobats provide non-stop entertainment performing astonishing stunts, gravity-defying tricks and spectacular dance that will hold audience members in complete awe. The performance is approximately 75 minutes long with no intermission and is appropriate for ages five and up.

Time: 4 p.m. Curtain
 Cost: \$12
 Parking: \$8

Saturday, May 29
 46th Annual Strawberry
 Festival Parade

Village Green Between Euclid and Main
 Street
 Garden Grove
www.strawberryfestival.org

The festival's Celebrity Parade will salute the "Olympic Spirit" featuring former Olympians and celebrities from the sports world, radio, TV and films. The parade will begin at Ninth and Chapman Avenues and continue west to Euclid and south along the festival grounds.

Time: 10 a.m.
 Cost: Free

**Mentors may use the Harbors Beaches & Parks passes for entry and parking at County of Orange facilities. Special events may have an additional fee.*

Mentoring Matters

WELCOME NEW MENTORS

South/	Clay Nicholson
Costa Mesa	Amanda Severs Neshat Khadem
East	Asha Patel
West	Diana Abruscato Angela Flores Cyrus Sarange
Aspen	Michelle Palsis

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE MOVED ON

South/	Micah Schiesel
Costa Mesa	Sarah Lee
North	Katie Ruebsamen
West	Shabnam Dezugulish Yvette Gonzalez
Aspen	Athena Vuong

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Douglas Voorhees	5/7
Dustin Harris	5/7
Robert Walters	5/9
Daniel Roditi	5/10
Lisa Voigt	5/12
Jackeline Cruz	5/15
Charles Blanford	5/16
Nicole Hensley	5/17
Michael Coffey	5/18
Shannon Crotts	5/18
Lynda Aguilar	5/19
Melanie Lamoureux	5/21
Anne Sullivan	5/22
Kathryn Tanner	5/26

There's More Than One Way to Hug a Child...

The staff and clients of Children and Youth Services (CYS) and CYS-Project Together deeply appreciate the wonderful support provided by many local businesses and organizations. Our affiliation with the Mental Health Association of Orange County allows us to accept and distribute community resources that are an important asset in the therapeutic process for all the children we serve. Each month, we extend our thanks and give recognition to our caring donors.

Cheryl Destro
 Santa Ana

Mr. and Mrs. Shin
 Laguna Niguel

Peggy Evans
 Newport Beach

Statek Corporation
 Orange

Fiesta Toys—USA

Monica Guevara
 Placentia

Westminster Ice Arena
 Westminster

Antonio Larrea
 Placentia

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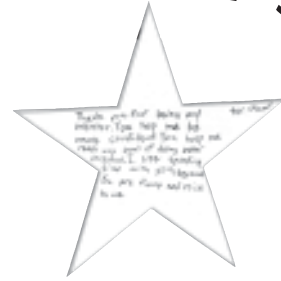
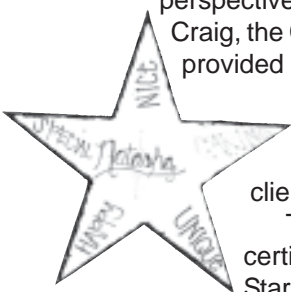
Celebration of Stars

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amount of time CYS-PT volunteers donate and dedicate to the program, adding that the 244 mentors matched with 281 clients, had contributed 23,034 hours of service over the last year. Also during the past year he noted that 106 community service volunteers served the program by assisting with administrative and other operational duties. In total, 350 mentors and volunteers contributed a total of 25,000 hours of service to CYS-PT's various programs and activities.

That message of dedication and devotion by volunteers was repeated throughout the evening in song, skits, speeches and awards, including a special "Tribute to Mentors" sung to the tune of Gilligan's Island and performed by the Surf City Singers, (please see lyrics, right). Conrad Wilson, a mentor since 1995, and Clay Nicholson, who has mentored since March of this year, presented their individual perspectives on the challenges and rewards of mentoring. Blancarosa Craig, the CYS therapist who supervises Clay and several other mentors, provided the clinician's viewpoint. She emphasized how mentors contribute to the therapeutic process, adding "they not only provide friendship and serve as role models for the child...but give me valuable feedback that I can then incorporate into my client's therapy session."

The evening concluded with an awards ceremony, at which time certificates of achievement were presented to the program's many Stars.



A Tribute to Mentors

(To the Tune of Gilligan's Island)

Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale
A tale of a fateful trip
That started between a special friend
And a child about to slip

The mentor was a mighty one...
Fearless, brave, and true
That helped to change a child's life
And changed his own life, too
And changed his own life, too

The two started from a County plan called
CYS-PT
And soon forged a bond that would last
for eternity

The weather started getting rough
Many ups and downs
The duo sometimes questioned us
About the outside bounds
About the outside bounds

Clinicians, parents, RVCs
Shared their separate view
But mentors knew all the child needed was
To have someone true
To have someone true

So not to worry, all is fine
Today the team prevails
It's because of our mentor's caring hearts
That children do not fail
That children do not fail



Volunteer "Stars" Shine Brightly at Annual Dinner

Celebrating a year of dedicated service as volunteer mentors are clockwise, from upper left, Ozgun Tumer with CYS-PT Service Chief Sharon Modaff; mentors Aaron Goehring and Nicole Calcagno; mentor Melanie Lamoureux with CYS-PT volunteer coordinator Veronica Chavez; and mentors Charles Blandford with his wife Pat (seated), Stan Hall and Alan Albright, MFT, Division Manager, Children and Youth Services.

How to Contact Children and Youth Services—Project Together

General Information

Phone: (714) 796-0100
Website: www.ochcahealthinfo.com/behavioral/cyspt
Email: CYSPT@ochca.com

Central Staff

Sharon Modaff, Service Chief I (714)796-0100
Nancy Robins, Program Supervisor I (714)796-0115
Martha Murphy, Volunteer Coordinator (714)796-0121
Peggy Evans, Volunteer Coordinator (714)796-0117

Regional Volunteer Coordinators/Resource Specialists

North—Veronica Chavez (714)577-5422
South/Costa Mesa—Jonathan Schiesel (714)850-8444
South/Laguna/Mission Viejo—Lee Boon (949)770-0855
East—Veronica Chavez (714)480-6756
West—Jonathan Schiesel (714)896-7449
Aspen—Adrienne Davalos (714)565-2830

Mission Statement

CYS-Project Together is a volunteer mentor program dedicated to enhancing the mental and emotional well being of Children and Youth Services clients.

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